

George Washington, December 1756, Speech to Catawba Indians; incomplete, The Writings of George Washington from the Original Manuscript Sources, 1745-1799. John C. Fitzpatrick, Editor.

SPEECH TO CAPTAIN JOHNNE, CATAWBAS¹

[Winchester, October 28, 1756.]

Capt. Johnne: We Desire you to go to the Cherokees, and tell them the Road is now clear and Open; We expected them to War last Spring, and love them So well, that Our Governor Sent Some few men to build a fort among them; but we are mighty Sorry that they hearken so much to lies French tell, as to break their promise and not come to war, when they might have got a great deal of honour; and kill'd a great many of the French, whose hearts are false, and rotten as an old Stump. If they Continue to Listen to What the French Say much longer they will have great cause to be sorry, as the French have no Match locks, pow'd and Lead but what they got from King George our father, before the War began and that will soon be out; when they will get no more, and all the French Indians will be starving with Cold, and must take to Bows and Arrows again for want of Ammunition.

Tell them we long to Shake hands with them;

Let them get their knives and tomhawkes Sharpe, we will go before them, and show them the way to honour, Scalps, prisoners, and money Enough, We are mighty sorry they stay at home idle, when they should go to War, and become great men, and a terror and dread to their Enemies. Tell them they shall have Victuals enough, and used very kindly.

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The Catawbas were one of the eight Indian nations of North America discovered by the Europeans in the seventeenth century. Their region lay southward of the Tuscaroras, between the Yadkin and Catawba Rivers. They were brave, but not aggressive, in warfare, and although at one time they belonged to the powerful league of southern Indians who were determined to extirpate the whites, later on they allied themselves with the English and remained staunch friends to them ever after.—Hamilton's Letters to Washington.